

Application Number: 09/945,179
Art Unit: 3762

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, pending claims are herein amended and claims are presented for examination on the merits. Because the remaining pending claims (i.e.,) directly or indirectly depend from the amended claims, they too stand amended herein.

Applicants respectfully request entry and favorable consideration of said amended claims and the remarks presented herein. The following remarks are respectfully submitted.

I. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-6, 8-24, 28-33, 35-49, 54, and 56-67 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mathson (6,021,350).

While applicants respectfully disagree with the reasoning set forth by the Examiner, the rejected claims are herein canceled.

II. Claim objections

Claims 7, 25-27, 34, 50-53, and 55, are being objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended the claims in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and respectfully asserts that said claims are in condition for allowance.

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III. Conclusion

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited so that invention claimed therein may pass to timely issuance as U.S. Letters Patent.

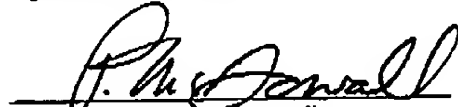
No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein; and no amendment made herein was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim unless Applicants have argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd J. Sheldon, et al.
By their attorneys,

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